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CD 615 Discipleship Development in the Home

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
School of Practical Theology/Department of Christian Education
Course Prospectus

**CD 615/CO615 -Discipleship Development in the Home
(3 hours) January 2008**

Revised Syllabus – Please follow the assignment schedule for this syllabus and disregard the former one. As this is an intensive, I would encourage you to begin reading prior to the first meeting day of the class so that on days when the class meets your evenings can be free for writing, corresponding on line with classmates and processing class material. Also note that there is one assignment, the “exercise in essential living” that you may want to complete prior to the beginning of class. Looking at the class roster, I think we are headed for a very exciting Jan term together, and I look forward to discovering what each of you will bring to the class. See you soon!!

Course Description:

This class presents a practical theology for understanding the partnership of the church and the family in the joint enterprise of encouraging lifelong Christian discipleship. A Trinitarian perspective is offered to the origins of the family, family roles, personhood, sin, the disintegration of family life, and salvation. Special attention is given to broad sociological trends and contemporary threats that are changing the structure and function of families, and to practices that nurture discipleship and relational connection in the family.

This is a required course for the MACE and MAYM degrees; it serves as a core elective in human development in the MAC and MAPC degrees; and it is one of two courses with a CD designation that allows students to complete the core elective requirement in Servant Ministry with a second course in Christian Discipleship in the Mdiv. degree.

Instructor:

Chris Kiesling	B.G.St., M.Div., Ph. D.
Meeting Room:	M 308
Office:	FM108 (the "womb" of the bookstore)
Phone:	858-2382 (If I am unavailable you may access my voice mail)
E-Mail:	chris_kiesling@asburyseminary.edu
Office Hours:	For such an intensive it is probably best to schedule appointments

Course Objectives

This class is designed so that persons who participate in the communal experiences of the class and who engage fully in critical study and reflection will be able to:

1. Articulate a Trinitarian perspective in understanding the family, family roles, personhood, sin, salvation and the consequent impact on the family.
2. Recognize the effects of the fall and the disintegration of family life both in the Biblical story and in one's own personal narrative, while yet embracing the unshakable confidence of God to utilize family experiences, one's current community of faith, and the identity wounds we suffer to return us as healers to the very places that wounded us.

3. Compare and contrast the broad sociological and developmental trends that are changing the definition, structure, and outcomes of contemporary family life in various cultures and subcultures. From these comparisons to further one's understanding, sensitivity, and capacity to discern issues of the family within the churches, cultures and communities they serve.
4. Identify the critical developmental tasks associated with each stage of life and formulate strategic discipleship applications aimed at these life transitions:
 - Parent-child attachment and deprivation
 - Image of God and how familial interactions shape understandings of justice and mercy
 - Identity and sexuality
 - Intimacy/marriage and relational development
 - Parenting/Generativity and mid-life transformations
 - Retirement and the years of wisdom
5. Appreciate differences in gender and ethnic identity, faith development and self-functioning with a view toward understanding why people are the way they are.
6. Experience aspects of the classroom as a demonstration of Trinitarian community.

Textbooks:

Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1999. (Note: the assigned readings refer to the third edition of this text, which contains two additional chapters and updated research from the second edition. If you purchase the second edition to save money you will need to supplement it with these additional enhancements.)

Larry Crabb, *Connecting: A Radical New Vision*. Nashville: Word, 1997. (If you are reading ahead of class time, focus primarily on the first half of this book. The later half reflects a reformed theology and is not as pertinent to the material for this class.)

Marjorie Thompson, *Family: The Forming Center*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1996. (I hope to have Cathy Stonehouse join us for a brief time one day to talk about involving children with God's word. If there is good reason, you may substitute one of her books on children and faith for the Thompson text.)

Donald Joy, *Empower Your Kids to be Adults*. Nappanee: Indiana, 2000.

Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage*. Multnomah Press. 1985. (Mason's book is a profound theological treatment of marriage. However, there may be reason for you to choose a different text on marriage. Donald Joy's book, *Two Become One* (Napannee: Indiana, 2000) addresses gender roles, unpacking Scriptures that have been inappropriately used to structure marriage hierarchically. Walt Wangerin's book, *As For Me and My House* is a great practical guide for newlyweds and a useful tool for counselors. Gary Thomas', *Sacred Marriage*, may be the most popular book on marriage being used for small group study. It promotes the premise that the purpose of marriage is to make you holy, not to make you happy. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.). Any of these may be substituted for the Mason text.

Dennis Kinlaw, *Sacred Pedagogy*. (booklet from Francis Asbury Press). **Note: this booklet was out of print. However, the Francis Asbury Society graciously provided us an electronic version of the document that I will make available to the class. You can learn more about their publications and become a member of the society by visiting their website at www.FrancisAsburySociety.org**

Dick Hardell and Merton Strommen, *Youth and Family Ministry: Four Imperatives: A Conceptual Model*. Youth and Family Institute – www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org.

Collateral readings: The following articles may be required if they can be made available on line or via digital scanning with copyright permissions, otherwise I would simply commend them to you for furthering your understanding of human development and the family.

Sarah Hinlicky, *Subversive Virginity*. First Things (available in the archived section of the collegeunion website under virtues and choices.)

Clifford Stevens *The Trinitarian Roots of the Nuptial Community*. St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, 35 (4), 351-358.

John H. Westerhoff, III (2000). *Will Our Children Have Faith?* Harrisburg, PA: Moorehouse Publishing, pp.1-23.

James Dobson (2001) *The Essential Father* in Bringing Up Boys: Practical Advice and Encouragement for those Shaping the Next Generation of Men. Tyndale House, pp. 53-66.

Henry Cloud and John Townsend, chapter five from *Raising Great Kids: Parenting with Grace and Truth*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999.

Archibald Hart (1994) *How Men think About Sex* in The Sexual Man: Masculinity without Guilt. Word Publishing, pp 51-68.

Ruthellen Josselson (1987) *Becoming Herself: Identity, Individuation, and Intimacy* in Finding Herself: Pathways to Identity Development in Women. Jossey Bass, pp. 10-41.

Chris Kiesling et. al. (2006) *Identity and Spirituality: A Psychosocial Exploration of the Sense of Spiritual Self* in *Developmental Psychology*. Vol 42, 6, 1269-1278.

David Schnarch (1997) *Differentiation: Developing a Self in Relation* in Passionate Marriage. Henry Holt and Co., pp. 53-69.

Rodney Clapp (1993) *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, pp. 48-66.

Ernst Boyer (1984) *Separate Spiritualities* in A Way in the World. San Francisco: Harper & Row, pp. 27-36.

In addition I may have you read summary reports from the following website(s). If you would like to purchase the booklets that accompany the full report the addresses are provided below:

Why Marriage Matters: Twenty-Six Conclusions from the Social Sciences. The executive summary of the report and ordering information for the full report (\$5) is available from www.americanvalues.org or by searching for the title of the report.

Class projects and papers

The “Exercise in Essential Living” (10 points)

This assignment is due the second week the class meets. However, since the class is an intensive, the time available outside of class may be limited once the class begins. To honor what I desire for this experience to be for you, I would encourage you to plan and complete it prior to the first day of class. I think you will still be able to connect it to class content that is presented later as our time together progresses.

The phrase “exercise in essential living” comes from Henry David Thoreau’s experiential accounting of *Walden*, in which he attempted to determine the bare bones of the necessity of life. Although we would not want to give the humanistic bent in Thoreau too much authority, his endeavor toward the simplicity of what’s essential seems especially pertinent for us today. Thus, on a smaller scale this assignment asks you to take at least four hours of one full day (even better if you could commit a full sabbath to it) and conduct your own “exercise in essential living.” It asks you to consider what really are the essentials of living fully? What really replenishes your soul?, What gladdens your heart?, What creative impulse did you once love that you have not had time to indulge during graduate school? What puts the fizz back in your Ale 8?

Or, to be even more Christlike, aim these questions not at yourself, but at how you could bless your family, spouse, and/or significant other? What kind of a day could you create for them that at the end of it they would say “Ahhhh, today was the most “essential” experience I’ve had in years!! Today I was really loved!! Today we really connected.” Or spend some time creating a family ritual that teaches discipleship that you will practice in the course of the next year. John Wesley once challenged people to an experiment with truth that in part entailed doing one perfectly selfless act each day. To aim this exercise at someone else may be experimenting with Wesley’s discipline in an abbreviated fashion.

Then take two to three pages to communicate what you have learned and have come to discover about how to live a soulful, essential life and/or how you give it to others. Don’t be afraid to report as well on any frustration you may have had in the experience, these too may be rich sources of enlightenment for you, revealing why so many of us “live lives of quiet desperation,” disconnected from those we purport to love most.

Attendance /Participation/Festival of Sharing (10 points)

Loan-granting institutions are now requiring attendance records on students for accounting purposes. Therefore, the faculty has an obligation to take daily attendance records in every class and report any repetitive absences. A small percentage of your grade for this class depends on attendance and includes what you bring to the “festival of sharing” on the final class days. Especially in the case of borderline grades, being remembered by the professor for your comments in class and creativity in the final project can be determinative

The festival of sharing is your opportunity to practice “family”/community as we share personal truth generated by reflection on concrete life experiences evoked from class. Draw deeply from your creative side in what you choose to present and really add value to this closure experience for your colleagues. If you work in a form of art, create something that displays discipling influences from your family and bring it to show; if you are from another culture introduce us to customs, stories or other cultural uniqueness that can broaden our understanding of family and relational valuing (e.g. wedding videos, rites of passage, national myths that reveal the values of your culture); if your family has a particularly profound way of teaching faith at home, if you as a couple or you with friends have a great way to bless each other, demonstrate for us how it is done (no ethos violations please); if you realized something about how family formed you that you have never seen before, bring your best reflection in which you wrote about it; if your grade is suffering, bring food ☺. Unfortunately in a class this size the presentation must be kept short, no longer than three minutes. (If there is ample reason to need a bit longer see me ahead of time.)

Group Work and Personal Reflection Summatives (required in two units for a total of 30 points)

I fully anticipate that in almost every class session and/or reading assignment you will find rich material for personal reflection and meaning making. Though some of these probes may be irritating, I believe them to be the “stuff” the Holy Spirit would desire for us to rub and polish into the pearls of our soul. For years I have been asking students to journal these experiences and have found in them a wealth of understanding. Because it has been such a rich experience for me to have access to these stories, and because time is so limited during a January intensive to give adequate feedback along the way; I thought I would experiment with having you share portions of these stories with each other, and then providing me with a one to two page summative reflection. I hope that we can foster an ethos of high trust that enables this to be a safe experience, and I do think it is important for future ministers to learn how vulnerable to be with their congregations, exercising their own discretion over what they choose to disclose. If this is a fearful task for you and you would prefer your story to be strictly confidential you can choose instead to journal and turn the reflections directly in to me. There may also be experiences that you revisit that would be safer to process with me than with a group of peers.

The reflective summaries that I will collect at the end of these weeks or not simply for the sake of chronicling your past - recording for me what your first years of life were like. Rather, they are intended for you to read your own life narrative through a theological lens, asking what concrete experiences confirm or challenge classroom applications about the family and family ministry, and what commonalities/uniqueness there is to your life journey. Though you may begin by recording the remembered experience in your reflections, you will want to move from this to reflecting and sharing what that experience has to teach you about ministering to families. What new questions emerge that you feel compelled to follow? What implications might your corporate reflections hold for ministry?

For example, instead of simply telling me that you had such and such a family life, try to discern what dynamics make families function the way they do? Ask questions about why discipline gets practiced the way it does?, What aspects of a families history forms a parents’ way of shaping their children?, What ways do families encourage or discourage their children from taking on the responsibility to become an adult?, How do churches work with or against

families in encouraging faith development?, What impressions did families outside of your own make upon you in the impressionable years?, How might involvement of a Christian community aid these families? Recount identity wounds, but also relate what you are learning that might be valuable to others who have suffered in similar ways to find healing.

In my feedback to your reflective summaries I will try to meet you at whatever level of feedback you choose to expose me to (I think that is often the way the Holy Spirit works with us and between us). However, I also think it is best that I not enter into a formal therapeutic relationship with you while also serving as professor. If we uncover issues in which I think there might be benefit to seek further counseling, I will suggest it to you and with your permission we can work through student services to get an appointment with one of my respected colleagues or refer you to someone specializing in a particular area.

I am also open to you pursuing additional journaling, especially if there are moments of illumination that occur. Following are some additional questions that you may find probing.

- Being made in the “image of God” implies that I have the ability to create. I feel most creatively alive when I _____?
- What might my family/spouse be learning by observing me as a woman or man of God? What in my life is teaching them to experience life as gift or to gain a heart of gratitude?
- Is the church I belong to empowering families for ministry or replacing them and creating spiritual orphans?
- How might the church develop a wholistic approach to healthy sexuality?
- What would it be like to be married to someone like me?
- What would I experience and feel at church if I were a single person, thirty to forty years old, attending a Sunday school class and a worship service?
- What vision can the church carry that will curb the baby boomers tendency to spend retirement narcissistically?
- What question do I most hope that nobody will ever ask me while I am in seminary?

Unit papers (Trinitarian theology , Chronicling your family of origin, Ministry application project) – 50 points

In three of the units a specific writing assignment is detailed. Because these assignments vary widely and are weighted differently see the remainder of the syllabus for particularities.

Grading Scale

1. Attendance/Participation/FOS	10 points
2. Exercise in Essential Living	10 points
3. Summative reflections	30 points
4. Unit papers	50 points

TOTAL	100points
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The following descriptions written in *italics* have been determined by the faculty at Asbury Seminary and provide the guidelines for grading. I have attempted to provide additional rubrics following each description to clarify what I tend to look for in determining the marks for a particular assignment.

A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

Exceptional work is constituted by such things as: substantive theological reflection that reveals engagement of the “big ideas” of Scripture or the “big ideas” represented in the existing body of knowledge from the social sciences in a particular area of study and represented via assigned texts and presentations; thorough and penetrating personal insight gained from a sustained consideration of one’s concrete experience through the lifespan; creativity in translating assignments into useful pedagogical presentations; and excellence in grammatical, stylistic and communicative aspects of writing.

B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

Good work is constituted by solid theological reflection on the assigned readings and presentations in response to the given questions for a particular unit; the capacity to utilize classroom discussions and readings to understand and critically engage one’s own story; accurate ability to name specific ministry implications from one’s processing of information; and carefulness in grammatical, stylistic and communicative aspects of writing.

C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

Acceptable work is constituted by: obvious acquaintance with the assigned readings and classroom discussions at a level that allows for theological thought in response to the questions posed for a particular unit; references to one’s own story at a level that makes application of truth and would interest a congregational member in the insights being expounded; capacity to communicate grammatically and stylistically without detracting from the presentation.

D = Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives

Cursory reading of the texts that fail to represent the author’s intent; a flat restatement of the author’s work void of any personal appropriation of the material; grammatical or stylistic errors that frustrate the reader and detract from the thought of the paper; or other failures to fulfill reasonable expectations flowing from a seminary course of this nature.

F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Unacceptable work is usually willful, unexplained, or inexcusable lack of fulfillment of class assignments.

Planned January Agenda

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>Assignments/Class Focus</u>	<u>Readings</u>
UNIT 1 – Trinitarian Foundations, Creation Design and Intent		Intro, Df family The classroom as community	Crabb 1-4 Sacred Pedagogy Balswick preface
		Creation – God’s intent The Fall	Crabb 5-9 Balswick, Part One
		Family in the Biblical Story/ Discuss Crabb	Balswick, chapter 11

The assignment for this unit is to write a three to four page, double-spaced paper that provides a theological foundation for your understanding of the family. The paper should reflect a thoughtful interaction with both the readings for this unit and discussions from class. However, I am not so much interested in you outlining or repeating what the text says, nor for you necessarily to agree with the position I have taken in class. Rather, the paper intends to have you wrestle with your own understanding of how Scripture and class readings establish parameters for the importance of discipleship development in the home. As you compose this paper consider addressing the following questions:

1. What are the implications of being created in the image of a Trinitarian God for understanding the importance of family?? What did God intend by placing us in families even before we had Scripture or the revelation of Jesus?
2. What do you believe the story of creation and covenant tells us about gender roles and the intended relationship between family and society/nation-building?? How has the Fall affected those relationships? Are there places in society, families, or even church where we seem to be sanctioning more of the consequences of the fall than the creation intent??
3. Drawing from your reading of Crabb (especially the chart on page 39 that gets at the core of his book) offer a theological appraisal of how the ministry one offers and the parenting one practices tends to reflect one's view of personhood and diagnosis of the human condition.
4. The Balswicks structure their theology of the family on four or five Biblical themes. How is this different than prescribing gender roles or developing parenting practices from particular Scriptural passages? Are there other Biblical themes that may be important to consider in developing a theology of the family? How might these themes be used to inform a family that represents Trinitarian community and mature covenantal relationship? What ministry vision is growing in you for discipling families in this task? **Due on Thursday the first week of class (20 points).**

UNIT 2 Marriage and the origins of the family		Journey to Adulthood Marriage and Singleness Gender differences	Balswick, Part two and part five Mason – entire book Schnarch article Add Gottman chapter
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There are at least four broad themes that are introduced in the readings and class presentations in this unit:

- Issues related to how families form (or deform) us in our readiness for marriage and/or for living independent of a marriage partner.
- Theories of mate selection and how they influence courtship
- Concerns regarding how culture and biblical interpretation influence gender roles and communication patterns within and outside of marriage
- Developing a theology of marriage that balances the longing for companionship with the need for independence (differentiation).

Choose one of these themes that you would enjoy discussing with other seminary students, perhaps the one that best represents relational issues prevalent in your life at present.

Part of this unit will involve both in-class and on-line processing of these themes. In addition to your engaged participation with the group, you will provide a one to two page summative reflection from this interaction. **Summative paper is due by midnight on Saturday (15 points).**

UNIT 3 Family Discipleship and Faith Formation in Children		Erikson, funded trust Attachment style research Children's faith formation	Balswick, Part Three, Chapters 6-8 Thompson – entire book Stonehouse chapter/presentation Dobson, Westerhoff Cloud and Townsend
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Marjorie Thompson's book coalesces around the observation that family is the formational center. This unit will offer several theoretical lenses for unpacking the multi-faceted and far-reaching implications of this ordering insight. Often the best illumination of this truth comes from revisiting your own concrete experiences. This unit provides several theoretical lenses for processing this upbringing: attachment theory, dominant childhood feelings, family mottos, and socialization. As this material can become quite personal, your assignment for this unit involves chronicling a narrative of your early family experience, deriving from places of neglect or validation what may be critical relational dynamics for faith formation in the family.

In the middle of this unit a schematic from Bob Biehl's book WHY YOU DO WHAT YOU DO links one's dominant childhood feeling with an adult phobia and a style of relating. Similarly, attachment style research suggests that the kind of attachment one had with a primary caregiver tends to develop into an internal working model that is carried into subsequent relationships in the lifespan. For this unit, choose a schema that best enables you to understand your childhood nurturing and how it may be affecting your relational style today. The following areas may help you unpack significant issues that were formative in your family and may be things meaningful to share with your reflection group: (A) Name any explicit or implicit mottos your family lived or that you have witnessed in families around you – e.g. "anger could not be expressed in our home," "the unwritten rule in this house was 'don't cross dad/mom,'" "sexuality was taboo in our house probably because..." "the family secret that ruled our family was..." etc. (B) Name what was healthy in your family of origin and what may have been missing or misguided in their way of "blessing" you? (C) How can the body of Christ repair the wounds caused by families where no blessing was given, where the blessing was conditional, or where only part of the blessing was given?

As you become more self-aware of what may be hidden from others but nonetheless influencing the way you function in relationships, consider how this kind of "social/emotional intelligence" may be important to you in understanding people and in ministry? **Due on Tuesday of the second week (20 points). Also remember that your exercise in essential living is due at the beginning of class on Tuesday (10 points).**

UNIT 4 Faith Formation in Adolescence and the mid life		Adolescent faith development Types of families	Joy – entire book Balswick, part 3,
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journey		Identity Sexuality and the Media Discipline/Rites of passage	Chapters 9-10 and part 6, Chapters 15 and 16 Stevens article
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For this unit I will have you return to group processing and a summary response of one to two pages. Consider some of the following issues as you share together and then provide summative thoughts: Whose approval did I most seek as an adolescent and what drove me in seeking it here? Where do most teens seek to find validation and why? Whose attention did I recruit and how did it impact what I came to believe about myself? How might this awareness affect what a community of faith needs to be offering?

What story is being told about sexuality in the media? How has this story affected/distorted my desires, imagination, and perception about myself and about the way I view members of the opposite sex? Whose “dreamworld” is it and how do I feel about the way it tries to define male-female relationships? What movie do I find myself in and why? How were boundaries negotiated and discipline administered? What would I keep and what would I change in the way I establish boundaries with my own children and/or those I will serve in ministry? **Due on Wednesday of the final week of class (15 points).**

UNIT 5 Contemporary issues confronting the family Emerging ministries to families		Mid life/Later life Step and Blended families (Abuse and Violence?)	Balswick, Chapters 12, 17, 18, 19 and 20 Boyer article Clapp article YFMI booklet Hart article
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In your ministry you are likely to come across several issues related to discipleship and the family that there was not time to research in depth while at seminary, nor will there be a lot of time to write research papers while serving a congregation. For this final unit study a family, couple, or personal issue in which you feel like you or the church needs more insight. Examples might include: direction to families for devotionals/family altar, ministering to infertile couples, premarital counseling, theology of divorce, characteristics of families from other ethnic backgrounds, outlining a series of youth talks on sexuality, discipline in the family, ministry with special needs families, addiction recovery, etc. Although I hope you will aim for excellence, I regard this as a pastoral assignment rather than an academic one. Approach it as you might if you had a week to find the top five resources that address a burning issue that someone in your church needs you to address. Provide me with 3-4 pages of your most important findings expressed in a form that is useful to the local congregation.

A second option is for you to develop a strategic plan for ministry with families in a current or anticipated ministry setting. This could be a sermon outline, teaching series, retreat curriculum, structured programming for several age categories, booklet to give to young parents at their child’s baptism, etc. From your readings articulate ways the church could teach and aid parents during these early formative experiences. Either assignment is **Due no later than Saturday, the day after the class concludes (10 points).**

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENTS/FOCUS</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
Festival of Sharing (Additional units if time permits)		Grandparenting	Finish Balswick

Later Adulthood			
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A Few Other Noteworthy Items:

1. By faculty policy, church related work, minor illnesses or family situations generally do not constitute cause for late work. (Please do contact me however when such situations arrive.) I will accept late papers, but because they fail to meet the criteria of “surpassing class expectations” it is unlikely that they will receive any grade higher than a “B+” and they will typically be returned without comment.
2. A bibliography for the course will be distributed in a subsequent early class sessions.